Here in Laramie it has turned cold and bright as we head towards the end of the fall semester. We’ve welcomed a terrific new class of students after a very busy admissions season last winter, and we’re already gearing up for the next one, which promises to be as intense. We continue to be really fortunate in the students who decide to come to Laramie to write and teach with us, and I hope the good luck continues.

We’ve had a fantastic bunch of visitors and events this fall too. Our first eminent writer in residence of the year, Maggie Nelson, dropped in right at the start of the semester and will return in April for thesis defenses and a reading. The poet CAConrad gave a brilliant reading downtown and led one of his singular new somatics workshops for the MFA students. On a visit in October, the fiction writer Brian Leung read at Coe Library from his latest novel, met with undergraduates at the Rainbow Resource Center and Multicultural Resource Center (both of which are still buzzing about his warmth and kindness), and emerged unscathed from a dire snowstorm to boot. Our students, faculty, and alumni participated in two linked events, a symposium on Wyoming water hosted by the UW Art Museum and our second annual Listening to Nature evening, co-sponsored with our comrades at the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources and the Wyoming Outdoor Council. The student reading series has been as fun and lively as ever this year, including a first-ever reading at Laramie’s square-dancing club, the Quadra Dangle. And our eminent poet in residence Mark Nowak came to town to plan the city-wide series of community poetry workshops he’ll lead alongside UW creative writing students and faculty this coming February.

In December, I head off for a semester’s sabbatical. My colleagues Alyson Hagy and Brad Watson will run the show while I’m away. Please feel free to contact them with any news, questions, or ideas. I’m glad to leave the program in their good hands.

Beth Loffreda, Director
LISTENING TO NATURE

The second annual “Listening to Nature” program showcased works from scientists, artists and writers reflecting on human perceptions of the natural world on Friday, November 9, at the Berry Biodiversity Conservation Center on the University of Wyoming campus. The evening began with a reception in the lobby, followed by readings in the auditorium.

The Wyoming Outdoor Council, the UW Creative Writing Program, and the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources sponsored the evening.

The featured artists were Melanie Matthews and Alexandre Latchininsky. Matthews, a photographer, earned her masters in environment and natural resources and rangeland ecology and watershed management from UW last spring. Latchininsky, who makes unique collages from natural materials, is associate professor and Extension Entomologist in UW’s Ecosystem Science and Management Department.

Featured readers were Kristen Gunther, Chris Madson, Emilene Ostlind, Carlos Martinez del Rio, and Harvey Hix. Gunther is a doctoral student in the Program in Ecology; she also recently completed her MFA in Creative Writing at UW. In her research and creative work, she explores and describes the complex interactions between humans and their environments, including how language can facilitate an understanding of those complexities.

Madson, of Cheyenne, has been the editor in chief of Wyoming Wildlife magazine, a publication of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, for 29 years, during which time that magazine has won more than 100 national awards for excellence in communicating issue of conservation, wildlife management, and ethics.

Ostlind earned her MFA in creative nonfiction writing and environment and natural resources from UW in 2010 writing a collection of essays about pronghorn migration in western Wyoming. She worked as an environmental reporter for High Country News and WyoFile before becoming the Public Relations Coordinator for the Haub School.

Martinez del Rio is a practicing scientist and teaches at the University of Wyoming, where he is faculty in the Zoology and Physiology Department. He loves poetry almost as much as he loves fellowship with wild, feral, and domestic creatures, which is a hell of a lot. The chemistry of his body is that of the place where the mountain meets the prairie.

Hix has authored several acclaimed collections of poetry, considers a modest nip of good scotch a fine complement to the whole fireplace-and-good-book experience, and teaches creative writing at the University of Wyoming.

“Listening to Nature” is meant to showcase local and regional artistic talents, stimulate new thinking about human relationships to the environment, and cultivate community engagement with artists to understand our surroundings.

The Wyoming Outdoor Council protects Wyoming’s environment and quality of life for future generations. The MFA Creative Writing program aims to mentor a new generation of writers. The Haub School advances the understanding and resolution of complex environment and natural resource challenges through interdisciplinary teaching, research and policy analysis, and collaborative decision making support.
FACULTY NEWS

Danielle Pafunda had a summer residency at Millay Colony for the Arts in the Hudson Valley. Her new poetry collection Manhater is out from Dusie Press Books.

Alyson Hagy published her third novel, Boleto, with Graywolf Press in May. Boleto was an Indie Next! selection by the American Booksellers Association, a Summer Reading selection by National Public Radio, and a Great Group Reads selection by the Women’s National Bookclub Association. She also gave the keynote address at the Equality State Book Festival in Casper in September.

Andy Fitch has published a new book entitled Pop Poetics: Reframing Joe Brainard with Dalkey Archive Press.

Mark Jenkins has won a Lowell Thomas award for his story about lions and daughters from SATW. Two of his stories were selected for inclusion in 2012 Best American Travel Writing, edited by William T. Vollman. Mark also successfully climbed Mt. Everest as part of a National Geographic team marking the 50th anniversary of the first American ascent.

Brad Watson's essay, “Dragged Fighting From His Tomb,” appeared in the new anthology, A Short Ride: Remembering Barry Hannah.

This summer and fall, Jeff Lockwood was the artist-in-residence at three National Parks: Mesa Verde, Isle Royale, and Crater Lake. The residencies were relaxing, fruitful, evocative, and enchanting—and essays are in the works!

Kate Northrop published new poems, “The Apartment” and “High Plains”, in the recent issue of Virginia Quarterly Review on Contemporary American Poetry and read from her collection, Clean, at Texas Tech and in the Sarabande Reading Series.

ALUMNI NEWS

Katie Henson is a Visiting Lecturer in English at Millikin University, where she teaches Composition and Creative Writing and sometimes US Studies. Her manuscript took second place in the Santa Fe Writer’s Project Poetry Awards. She had a review published in the Spring issue of Boxcar Poetry Review and has two poems forthcoming in Hobart.

Kelly Herbinson is now the Senior Biologist on the Ivanpah Solar Electric Station outside Las Vegas, NV.

Luling Osofsky is currently a resident at Brush Creek in Saratoga, Wyoming. In February, she will be in residency at Vermont Studio Center. She also has an essay appearing in the April issue of Orion, called Wild Wild East. It details Asian influences in Laramie—born out of the Rebecca Solnit atlas making workshop.

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Emily Trotsel is working as an outdoor educator at High Trails Outdoor Science School in Big Bear City, California. When not wandering the woods with elementary school students, she is also working as a copywriter and managing the social media for HORNE—an online boutique/modern design company.

Estella Soto now teaches kindergarten at Laramie Montessori. In addition to her new teaching position, Estella received a grant through the Wyoming Arts Council to host a Laramie writers of color reading in fall of 2012.

Callan Wink had stories accepted by Granta, Ecotone, and The New Yorker in 2012. He has a short story anthologized in The New Yorker Book of Dogs.

Alan Barstow will have one of his essays appear in the fall issue of Witness, out of UNLV/Black Mountain Institute.

STUDENT BIOS

Chelsea Biondolillo’s prose has appeared or is forthcoming in Birding, Creative Nonfiction, DIAGRAM, The Rumpus, and others. In 2012, she was selected as a next-generation science communicator by To Think, To Write, To Publish, funded in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation and the Consortium for Science and Policy Outcomes. She has a passion for both long and short form nonfiction, and her panel, “The Art and Craft of Short-form Nonfiction” was accepted by the Association of Writing Programs for presentation in 2013. Chelsea is currently pursuing a dual MFA in creative nonfiction and environmental studies and has received a variety of travel and research grants that have allowed her to pursue studies as wide-ranging as Nebraskan beetles, New York oysters, and Spanish vultures. While she loves the wide prairies of the Laramie basin, her heart splits the rest of its affections between Portland, Oregon and Brooklyn.

Rebecca Estee is from Texas and a lonestar through and through. That being said she spent most of her young adulthood in St. Louis getting a degree from Washington University and then working for various nonprofits. Rebecca makes art and writes poetry. She has a giant dog named Ruba. Rebecca is fascinated by extinct things and sleazy country music. She has had work published in The Lumberyard.

Kali Fajardo-Anstine is a second year MFA student from Denver, Colorado. Her writing has appeared in Bellevue Literary Review, Existere Journal of Arts and Literature, and the anthology “Other Tongues: Mixed-Race Women Speak Out.” Her short story, “Remedies,” was a Notable in the 2011 Best American Nonrequired Reading. In 2011, she was awarded a Hedgebrook Residency for women authoring change.

Daniel Freije is a poet from Worcester, Massachusetts by way of western Massachusetts. He graduated from Amherst College in 2011 with a BA in English. He thinks Laramie is great, but his heart remains in the Pioneer Valley with the Connecticut River, the hills, the maple trees, and Emily Dickinson’s ghost.

Rebecca Golden is the author of a memoir, “Butterbabe: The True Adventures of a 40-Stone Outsider” (Random House UK) and has contributed to Salon, the Times of London, Woman (UK), Marie Claire South Africa, Sunday Life Australia, Cookie (Conde Nast), Eve (UK) and the Toledo Blade. She received her BA in history and BS in journalism from Boston University. Along with Sofi Thanhauser, she will read original work during the symposium for Wyoming River Fugues on November 10. She has an essay upcoming in Salon.

Caleb Johnson grew up in the hills of Northwest Alabama. He studied journalism at The University of Alabama and worked at a small-town newspaper before entering the University of Wyoming’s MFA in creative writing program. While enrolled in the program, he has been awarded a Dick and Lynne Cheney

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Study Abroad Grant and a Haub Student Research and Creative Activities Grant.

**Brock Michael Jones** is an MFA candidate in poetry at the University of Wyoming. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in the Iowa Review, Sugarhouse Review, Mobius: The Journal of Social Change, and Metaphor, among others. In 2012, he was named a finalist in the Iowa Review’s Jeff Sharlet Memorial Prize for Veterans. Jones was awarded a James Orr Willits Ethics Award in 2012 from the University of Wyoming’s Philosophy Department, which provided financial support to conduct interviews with current and former soldiers he served with in Iraq in an effort to understand how the passage of time and physical separation affects combat veterans’ individual and shared war memories.

**Miguel Kaminski** graduated from UC Berkeley with a BA in English. He is currently an MFA candidate in Nonfiction at the University of Wyoming.

**Ginger Ko** is a poet from Los Angeles, CA. She studied English at UCLA, and Biology at Indiana University.

**Lam Pham** was born in Midland, TX. He’s never going back. He is a first-year MFA candidate in fiction and graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2008. Prior to teaching Freshman Composition, he has freelance speech-written for departmental directors, reviewed jazz albums, provided research for self-help books, and waited tables and lit charcoals at a hookah bar. He can be found on Google, much to his dismay.

Upon a cross-country road trip from her home state of South Carolina, **Callie Plaxco** arrived in Wyoming in pursuit of poetry. Prior to this adventure, she spent a few years in New York City working at W.W. Norton as international sales assistant. Despite the bounty of good literature at her fingertips, the MFA and move West was irresistible.

**Joey Rubin** came to Wyoming by way of California, Oregon, New York, Argentina, England and Mexico. His essays, reviews and translations have appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle, Nerve, Paste, the Forward, the Daily Beast, the Critical Quarterly, Hemispheres and the Argentina Independent, where he is a contributing editor. His short fiction, “Toward Lithuania,” was included in the anthology Promised Lands: New Jewish Fiction on Longing and Belonging. He has been writing stories about displacement, the reasons for which should be obvious.

**Adrian Shirk** was born in the now-defunct Manhattan maternity ward at St. Vincents Hospital on an important national holiday. She’s a founder/editor for The Corresponding Society, and its journal Correspondence, and assistant editor at Wilder Quarterly, an NYC-based horticulture and design magazine. Her nonfiction has appeared in Wilder Quarterly, Owl Eye Review, Spork, Water Science, 7Stops Magazine, and Providence Monthly; also a smattering of ghost writing projects and interior design media. She holds a BFA in Writing for Publication, Performance, and Media from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. Left to her own devices, she writes about American religion, astrology, geography, the remains of fallen cities, and family ancestry.

**Ben Slater** is a part-time student in the MFA Creative Writing Program. He graduated with a BSc in Physics from Imperial College, London, in 1992, and has worked as a musician, recording engineer and record producer. He currently works as an engineer at Wyoming Public Radio and runs a small recording studio. He likes to write songs and poems.

**WYOMING GIRLS SCHOOL**

-**Rebecca Estee**

During the fall semester Kali Fajardo-Anstine and I have been venturing out to Sheridan, Wyoming to teach monthly creative writing workshops at the Wyoming Girls School. This project has been made possible through generous support from the MFA Program and the UCross Foundation and the willingness of The Girls School to open their classrooms. I have been so impressed by the girls that we get to teach. We have seen some really compelling and wonderful work come from them. They’ve written about anything from restaurant fires to sacred cows. We’ve made books. But what has been most impressive to me though is the sense of collaboration and support they share with each other. Kali and I came into this project hoping we could try to foster a creative learning environment, not realizing that we were walking into one. Another boon from this experience has been an excuse to explore Wyoming more. Some highlights from our adventures have included: dodging deer and wild turkey, counting cows with MFA alum Tim Raymond, listening to bluegrass music at the Occidental Hotel, talking crystals with CA Conrad and wandering around Sheridan waiting to replace a blown out tire.

“When people come in it is an inspiration because I know that I will be able to share my writing with others and not just one person.” -Sam, student at Wyoming Girls School

*I appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with others who value education and who can share their teaching ideas. I also appreciate those who are willing to share personal experiences with the students that may inspire and encourage them to see potential in themselves. The more we build these young ladies up, the more they begin to recognize their own value and accept their true worth.” -Tracie, teacher at Wyoming Girls School